

Western capitals? Streseniann, who steered the ship from 1923 till his death in 1929, had no hesitation about the reply. By her cultural traditions Germany belonged to the West., and most of her people looked down on the Slavs as their inferiors. During the war he had been a crude expansionist ready for every step thought likely to lead to victory. The collapse of his hopes taught him that the youthful Republic required different methods from the Hohenzollem Empire in the days of its strength. Co-operation with the Western Powers and the League seemed the wisest course. He was aware that a real *rapprochement* was impossible without freely accepting the loss of Alsace and Lorraine, and he was prepared to pay the price,

On January 20, 1925, Lord D'Abernon, our Ambassador at Berlin, forwarded a German Memorandum proposing a guarantee of existing frontiers in the West. Austen Chamberlain replied that the overture was premature, and suggested that Germany should allay France's fears by entering the League. On February 9 a more detailed German Memorandum was sent to Paris, proposing a pact of peace for a long term between England, France, Germany and Italy; a guarantee by the states interested in the Rhineland of the existing frontier and the continuance of the demilitarization zone ; and treaties of arbitration between Germany and her co-signatories. While unable to guarantee her eastern frontiers, which she desired to change, she was ready for arbitration treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia. Here were the outlines of the future Locarno treaties, little-modified by months of discussion. The principle was not a novelty, for in 1922 the German Government had proposed a pact with France,

England and Belgium, not to go to war with one another for a generation; but the plan was promptly rejected by Poincare, at that moment about to march into the Ruhr.

With the defeat of the Bloc National the mood of France changed, and Chamberlain realized that if the Protocol was rejected we should have to put something in its place. He was ready to promise support to France, but knew that such a pledge would be vigorously opposed. Public opinion was intensely suspicious of any particular undertaking, he wrote to Lord Crewe, our Ambassador at Paris, -on February 16, 1925 ; both the Liberal and Labour Parties were ready for a fight at the first indication that he was contemplating a regional pact, and the League of Nations Union disapproved